

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GENEVA 05666 01 OF 02 171730Z

44

ACTION ORM-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00

AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ITFE-05

(ISO) W

----- 097724

P 171650Z JUL 75

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4705

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 5666

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, TH

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND--UNHCR

1. ON JULY 16 UNHCR SADRUDDIN AGA KHAN MET IN GENEVA WITH FOREIGN MINISTER OF THAILAND CHATICHAI CHOONHAVAN. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF THAT DISCUSSION AS REPORTED TO MISOFF BY HCR.

2. FONMIN STATED THAT THERE ARE NOW SOME 100,000 REFUGEES IN THAILAND INCLUDING 40-50,000 VIETNAMESE WHO HAVE BEEN IN COUNTRY OVER 20 YEARS. THE REMAINDER COMPRISED GROUPS OF DISPLACED PERSONS FROM CAMBODIA, LAOS, AND VIETNAM WHO ARRIVED RELATIVELY RECENTLY. HE STATED THAT THAILAND'S CURRENT POLICY WAS TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND TO CHANGE THAILAND'S IMAGE FROM BEING A MILITARY BASE TO THAT OF A BASE FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE. THIS RESPECT HIS GOVERNMENT WISHED UNHCR TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE. HE WAS ANXIOUS TO SEE A RELIEF OPERATION FOR BENEFIT OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS STARTED ASAP AND OBSERVED THAT A COORDINATED EFFORT WAS REQUIRED. HE EXPRESSED INTENTION TO INFORM UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ABOUT THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GENEVA 05666 01 OF 02 171730Z

PROBLEM IN HIS SPEECH DURING GENERAL DEBATE IN EARLY

OCTOBER INCLUDING DUE REFERENCE TO ROLE OF UNHCR.

3. HCR ASSURED FONMIN THAT HIS OFFICE WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND IN HELPING TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OUTLINED BY THE MINISTER. HCR EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF GOT'S POSITION RESPECT ITS WISH TO BE HUMANITARIAN BASE FOR ASSISTANCE TO THE DISPLACED PERSONS FOR WHOM HE, THE UNHCR, WAS READY TO PROVIDE HIS GODD OFFICES. REFERRING TO RECENT LETTER FROM THAI FOREIGN MINISTRY, HCR INFORMED FONMIN THAT HIS OFFICE WAS ALREADY IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH ALL PARTIES CONCERNED IN BANGKOK REGARDING UNHCR ASSISTANCE WITH VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION, RESETTLEMENT AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE PENDING DURABLE SOLUTIONS. HCR NOTED THAT A MEETING WOULD BE HELD SOON IN BANGKOK UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP THAI RED CROSS AND ATTENDED BY UNHCR, ICRC, ICEM IN THAI MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERIOR FOR PURPOSES DEVELOPING SUITABLE PROGRAMS.

4. FONMIN EXPRESSED WISH THAT UNHCR PRESENCE IN THAILAND BE STRENGTHENED AND HE PLEDGED FULL FACILITIES AND SUPPORT. HCR REPLIED THAT MEASURES TO THIS EFFECT WOULD BE TAKEN VERY SOON.

5. IN GENERAL REVIEW OF CURRENT SITUATION IN THAILAND AND HER EXTERNAL POLICY, THE FONMIN DREW ATTENTION TO GEO-POLITICAL SITUATION OF HIS COUNTRY, HER MEMBERSHIP OF ASEAN (ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH EAST ASIAN NATIONS) AND THE KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION OF ASEAN CONCERNING NEUTRALITY OF THE REGION. THE MINISTER STRESSED HIS GOVERNMENT'S WISH TO REMAIN A NEUTRAL NATION AND HE FELT THAT EVEN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESENT WORLD SITUATION IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THAILAND TO BE A NEUTRAL COUNTRY. HE WAS RETURNING TO BANGKOK ON 17 JULY AND FEW DAYS LATER WOULD START ON A MISSION TO SINGAPORE, PHILIPPINES, NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA AFTER WHICH HE WOULD BE VISITING HANOI. HE RECALLED THE RECENT VISITS OF GOVERNMENTAL DELEGATIONS FROM THE DEMOCRATIC

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 GENEVA 05666 01 OF 02 171730Z

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AND THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM. AS REGARDS THE DRVN, AN IMPORTANT POINT WAS THE QUESTION OF THE 40-50,000 VIETNAMESE WHO HAD BEEN IN THAILAND FOR MANY YEARS AND THE MAJORITY OF WHOM SHOULD BE RETURNING HOME. THIS POINT WOULD BE TAKEN UP AGAIN BY HIM IN HANOI. IN HIS TALKS WITH THE PRG, THE LATTER HAD INDICATED THEY WERE DISTURBED BY THE FACT THAT THAILAND HAD

HAD DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE FORMER RVN. THE FONMIN HAD POINTED OUT TO THE PRG THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RVN WAS AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED GOVERNMENT AND THAILAND'S POLICY IS TO TRY AND HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND THEIR GOVERNMENTS. THE TALKS WITH THE PRG WERE THE FIRST CONTACT BETWEEN THE RSVN AND THAILAND AND FUTURE DISCUSSIONS WILL BE HELD FOR ESTABLISHING NORMAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

6. THE MINISTER ALSO TOUCHED UPON RECENT TALKS THAT THE THAI PRIME MINISTER, MR. KUKRIT PRAMOJ, AND HE HAD HAD IN PEKING WHERE THEY HAD MET WITH BOTH CHAIRMAN MAO TSE TUNG AND CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CHOU EN LAI. THE TALKS HAD BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL AND THE THAI VISITORS HAD ACHIEVED 100 PERCENT WHAT THEY WENT TO ACHIEVE. THERE WERE THREE MAJOR POINTS:

A. NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS; DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS WOULD BE ESTABLISHED;

B. MUTUAL RESPECT; THIS INCLUDED EQUALITY IN TRADING RELATIONS, I.E., THAT CHINA WOULD PURCHASE COMMODITIES FROM THAILAND FOR A SAME AMOUNT AS THAILAND IMPORTED FROM CHINA; AND

C. NON-INTERFERENCE IN EACH OTHERS AFFAIRS. THIS POINT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE FOR THAILAND. THE DISCUSSIONS WERE MOST CORDIAL AND HE EXPECTED A FRUITFUL COOPERATION WITH CHINA.

7. THE FONMIN SAID HE HAD KNOWN MR. CHOU EN LAI
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 GENEVA 05666 01 OF 02 171730Z

FOR A LONG TIME AND HAD VISITED HIM FREQUENTLY IN THE PAST. DURING THE RECENT VISIT TO PEKING, THE PRIME MINISTER AND HE HAD ALSO DISCUSSED THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA WHICH WORRIED THEM CONSIDERABLY. THE FONMIN HAD INDICATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE RETURN OF PRINCE NORODOM SIHANOUK TO PHNOM PENH. THE CHINESE SAID THEY DID NOT KNOW WHEN, IF EVER, PRINCE SIHANOUK WOULD RETURN TO PHNOM PENH. FROM MR. CHOU EN LAI'S REMARKS, THE THAI MINISTER HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT CHINA WAS NOT INFORMED EITHER OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN CAMBODIA AT THE MOMENT, WHO OR WHAT BODY WAS IN CHARGE AND WHAT THE FUTURE WOULD BRING. THE THAI FONMIN BELIEVED THAT THERE WOULD BE FURTHER INFLUXES OF CAMBODIANS INTO THAILAND AND, IN FACT, THERE WERE NEWCOMERS ALMOST DAILY.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GENEVA 05666 02 OF 02 171732Z

44

ACTION ORM-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00

AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ITFE-05

(ISO) W

----- 097715

P 171650Z JUL 75

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4706

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 5666

8. THE FONMIN WAS ALSO WORRIED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN LAOS WHERE A RECENT RESHUFFLE OF THE GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN PLACE. THE PREVIOUS FONMIN, PHAGNA PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, WHILE ADHERING TO THE PATHET LAO PRINCIPLES, WAS A MODERATE MAN IN THE APPLICATION OF THE POLICIES AND THE THAI FONMIN HAD HAD GOOD RELATIONS WITH HIM.

9. REVERTING TO THE PROBLEM OF THE DISPLACED PERSONS IN THAILAND, THE MINISTER SAID THAT THAILAND'S POLICY IS NOT TO PERMIT THEM TO FIND A NEW HOME IN THAILAND. HOWEVER, IT IS ALSO REALIZED THAT THEY CANNOT BE SENT BACK TO THEIR COUNTRIES IF THEIR LIFE WOULD BE AT STAKE. IN THIS CONNECTION HE NOTED THAT A GROUP OF CAMBODIANS HAD RETURNED HOME ONLY TO BE EXECUTED SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVAL. THEREFORE, A RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE TO INCLUDE GUARANTEES FOR THEIR LIVES AND FUTURES.

10. REITERATING THAT THE REFUGEE PROBLEM WAS VAST IN HIS COUNTRY, THE FONMIN SAID THE GOVERNMENT WISHED TO ENSURE THAT THE REFUGEES WOULD NOT BE USED BY

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GENEVA 05666 02 OF 02 171732Z

ANYONE FOR MILITARY OR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES AGAINST THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN. THIS WAS ONE OF THE REASONS THAT HE FELT THE UN, I.E., UNHCR, SHOULD BE CLOSELY INVOLVED IN AID TO THEM AS A SAFEGUARD AGAINST SUCH A POSSIBILITY. THE HCR STRESSED THAT IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN THE POLICY OF HIS OFFICE TO ASSIST ONLY NEEDY PERSONS WHO WISHED TO LIVE PEACEFULLY IN THE COUNTRY OF ASYLUM WHILE THEY WERE THERE AND UNHCR FULLY ENDORSED THE VIEW OF THE MINISTER.

11. FINALLY, THE FOREIGN MINISTER EXTENDED AN INVITATION TO THE HCR TO COME TO BANKOK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO SEE THE SITUATION FOR HIMSELF. THE HCR WARMLY ACCEPTED THE INVITATION AND TENTATIVELY A VISIT IN THE FIRST HALF OF SEPTEMBER WAS AGREED UPON. DALE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975GENEVA05666
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750247-0699
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750748/aaaabqil.tel
Line Count: 246
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ORM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 JUN 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <03 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND--UNHCR
TAGS: SREF, TH, VS, CB, UNHCR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006